

# Documents on Diplomacy: Lessons

## *Aimed at the Heart of America: The Adams-Onís Treaty*

Standard:

- II. Time, Continuity, and Change
- III. People, Places, and Environments
- VI. Power, Authority, and Governance
- VII. Production, Distribution, and Consumption
- IX. Global Connections

Grade Level: 9–12

Objectives:

The student will:

- Describe the establishments of Florida's boundaries
- Analyze the primary document, *The Adams-Onís Treaty*
- Determine the rationale for Spain's relinquishment of territory
- Assess the territorial gains of the United States

Time: 1 class period (Additional time needed for extension activity)

Materials: Document: **1819** *The Adams-Onís Treaty*

Resources: *Map: United States*

Exercises: *Aimed at the Heart of America: Analysis of the Adams-Onís Treaty*  
*The Adams-Onís Treaty: A Good Deal*  
*More to the Story: Map of East and West Florida*

Procedures:

- 1.** Project (or distribute) the resource, *Map of the United States*; distribute the document, *The Adams-Onís Treaty*.
- 2.** Have students work in pairs to collect information from these sources.
- 3.** Provide the exercise, *Aimed at the Heart of America: Analysis of the Adams-Onís Treaty*, for the pairs to complete.
- 4.** Discuss the information collected by students. In particular, encourage students to speculate and synthesize answers to questions 3, 5, and 6.
- 5.** Have students (remaining in pairs), complete the exercise, *The Adams-Onís Treaty: A Good Deal?*

**6.** Review the placement of items within the categories. Discuss the benefits of each aspect of the treaty (and other information provided.) Determine what made the Adams-Onís Treaty a really good deal. Ask students if additional items could be included in the "Benefit: Both" section and, if so, to justify their selections.

Extension Activities:

Provide the exercise, *Map of East and West Florida: More to the Story*. Have students place information on the lines extended from each section of Florida. Additional research may be needed for proper placement of facts. Once the map work is completed, refer to the title of the map. Ask students to explain what "more to the story" means. (Refer specifically to how West Florida was obtained by the United States.)

Sources for research:

**a.** [http://www.archive.org/stream/westfloridacontr00coxi/westfloridacontr00coxi\\_djvu.txt](http://www.archive.org/stream/westfloridacontr00coxi/westfloridacontr00coxi_djvu.txt)

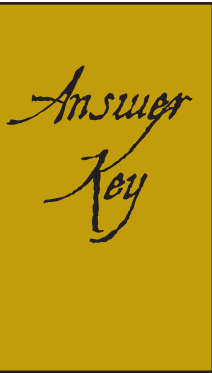
**b.** [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/West\\_Florida\\_Controversy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/West_Florida_Controversy)

**c.** From James Madison's second State of the Union address to Congress:

"Among the events growing out of the state of the Spanish Monarchy, our attention was imperiously attracted to the change developing itself in that portion of West Florida which, though of right appertaining to the United States, had remained in the possession of Spain, awaiting the result of negotiations for its actual delivery to them. The Spanish authority was subverted, and a situation produced exposing the country to ulterior events which might essentially affect the rights and welfare of the Union. In such a conjuncture I did not delay the interposition required for the occupancy of the territory west of the river Perdido, to which the title of the United States extends, and to which the laws provided for the Territory of Orleans are applicable. With this view, the proclamation, of which a copy is laid before you, was confided to the Governor of that Territory, to be carried into effect. The legality and necessity of the course pursued, assure me of the favorable light in which it will present itself to the Legislature, and of the promptitude with which they will supply whatever provisions may be due to the essential rights and equitable interests of the people thus brought into the bosom of the American family."

*President's Annual Message, December 5, 1810, Annals of Congress, Senate, 11th Congress, 3rd Session, December 1810, pp. 12-13*

**d.** ". . . with the Spanish holding Mobile as part of Spanish West Florida until 1813, when it was seized by the U.S. General James Wilkinson during the War of 1812." [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mobile,\\_Alabama](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mobile,_Alabama) ■



*The Adams-Onís Treaty: A Good Deal*

Benefit: United States

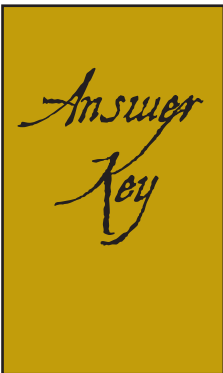
- East Florida
- West Florida
- Gave up claim to Oregon Country
- Clarification of western boundary of Louisiana Purchase
- Assured claims of its own [U.S.] citizens against Spain up to \$5 million
- Strengthened claim to territory north of the 42nd parallel
- Access to the Pacific
- Mississippi River: unencumbered access

Benefit: Spain

- Texas
- California
- Strengthened claim to territory south of the 42nd parallel
- Could focus on rebellions in South America

Benefit: Both

- Clarification of western boundary of the Louisiana Purchase
- Assured claims of its own [U.S.] citizens against Spain up to \$5 million



*More to the Story: East and West Florida Map*

1810

- 1, 2, 5, 8

1812-13

- 2, 3, 6

1819

- 2, 4, 7., 9